

Committee on Railways and Shipping

of parliament, and I think the calibre of pilot fitness that is maintained justifies that high rate of pay.

One requirement, I know, is that these pilots shall keep in perfect physical condition. In other words, they are not people like my hon. friend and myself who, occasionally, take long rides in the rear seats of aircraft and then go right back to our work. I think we both have had the experience of getting in at four o'clock in the morning—I know I have—and being at my desk down on Wellington street at nine o'clock on the same morning. In other words, there is nothing unusual in people going on working when they are tired.

But I say that pilots are required to be in perfect physical condition and so required in order that they can stand long hours, when the nature of their service requires that those long hours on duty are necessary.

Now, let us look at the duty time this pilot actually put in. From November 19 to December 12 he did no work at all. He was off duty. In other words, he was on holidays, and on his regular days off. Then on December 12 he was on duty for 14 hours and two minutes, including ten hours and 27 minutes in the air and three hours and 35 minutes on the ground. This was followed by 16 hours and 17 minutes off duty. In other words he was at home for 16 hours and 17 minutes.

Then on December 13 he was on duty for 12 hours and 32 minutes, which included nine hours and 54 minutes in the air and two hours and 38 minutes on the ground. This was followed by 33 hours and 15 minutes off duty at home.

On December 15 the captain was on duty for 17 hours and 29 minutes, which included 13 hours and 19 minutes in the air, and four hours and ten minutes on the ground. This was followed by 27 hours and 30 minutes off duty at home.

On December 17 the captain was on duty a total of 13 hours and 30 minutes, including ten hours and 13 minutes in the air and three hours and 17 minutes on the ground. If the flight to Montreal had been completed successfully he would then have had eight days off duty at home.

That is the situation.

Mr. Knowles: Would the minister permit a question? Has he any details of his figures for the 13th? His figures for the other days are very close to my own. The 13th is the day the minister said he was on duty 12 hours and 32 minutes. My figures show 16 hours for that day. In any case, the minister's figures total 57 hours and 33 minutes for the four days. Is that correct?

[Mr. Howe (Port Arthur).]

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): I have not added the duty time up; but I would point out that there are three men in the cockpit of a Constellation. There is the pilot, the co-pilot and the flight engineer. I would point out that, on long flights of that kind, the fatigue is not particularly serious. The automatic pilot is used a good deal, and one member of the crew of officers can go back and take a rest. There is a bunk provided in the cockpit for that purpose. He does not sit there continuously with the wheel in his hand guiding the aircraft. He sits there and makes his calculations; he makes his check points; and for a good deal of the time the automatic pilot is operating the aircraft.

This is true on long trips, but it is not true on short trips, generally speaking, where there are a number of landings and take-offs. The strain on a pilot is much greater than that it is on a flight from Montreal to Bermuda or from Toronto to Tampa. However, this is beside the point.

No one has suggested that the cycle this pilot was following was in any way irregular or that it was in violation of the agreement between T.C.A. and the pilots' association. And it is very interesting to note, in the evidence of the crew taken on oath, that no member of the crew suggested they were fatigued, or that fatigue had anything to do with the landing at Malton airport.

I may say there is no dispute as to what happened on the aircraft. Why the pilot did as he did, I suppose we will never know. He says he does not know. But in an accident where there was no loss of life, where the facts seem to be indisputable and where, as I say, medical evidence was taken from six eminent physicians who found no sign of pilot fatigue, I suggest that to hold a public inquiry is an exercise wholly uncalled for in the circumstances.

What does my hon. friend expect to prove by a public inquiry? Would he prove that there was something wrong with the aircraft? Would he prove that the pilot was not responsible for the procedure of landing? I think if he attempted to prove fatigue, expert evidence could be brought from every air line in the world to say that the cycle that was followed by this pilot was not one that would produce fatigue to the point where the pilot no longer would be able to carry out his duties efficiently.

Mr. Knowles: When the minister refers to a cycle such as this pilot had worked as not being fatiguing, may I ask if there is any provision for changing the cycle, changing the flights within the cycle, when there is a delayed trip? For example, according to the